

## Here's the Scoop

Here's the scoop on picking up poop. I am guessing this is not anyone's favorite chore, but it is very necessary for many reasons. As dog owners, we need to clean up after our pets and encourage others to do the same. Only in acting in this responsible way, will dogs be well received in our community.

Dog parks have become very popular. When pet waste is cleaned up, the parks are enjoyable places to visit. Your shoes stay clean, and your pet has less disease and parasite exposure. There are less odor and flies to bug you. Cleaning up waste also keeps bacteria, parasites and excess nutrients out of our streams and lakes. Of course, I know the people reading this article are not usually the ones who skip the unpleasant poop chore. To make sure dogs continue to be welcome at various parks and anywhere really, we need to encourage all dog owners to clean up.

The trick is to encourage clean up in a non-threatening, polite way. If you see a dog getting ready to unload, ask the owner if they need a clean up bag...as you hand them one. It may not be subtle, but I do this all the time and it works. I remind the owner that the waste bag dispenser is by the gate as you enter the play area. They usually mutter, but I am glad I made the effort to keep the park clean. If a loose dog goes potty in the park and no owner is in sight, I just clean up after it myself. It would be a shame to have a park close down a dog area because people didn't clean up after their pets.

Our modern world is crowded and busy. Parks and neighborhoods receive very concentrated use. Even in your own yard, no one likes accumulated dog waste. It is a big contributor to pollution of storm water run off. Dog waste acts like fertilizer, especially in water. Too much dog waste causes algae blooms and can make water toxic.

I found some trivia related to pet waste. I guess you really can find anything on the internet!

Only 40 percent of dog owners pick up their pet's waste.

Women are more likely to scoop than men.

Scientists are studying ways to convert dog poop into energy. It involves methane digestion...and most of the article was too much chemistry for this humane officer's brain!

Rats use dog waste as a food source. If a city has a rat problem, they will have to address pet poop problems.

Annually, dogs and cats generate 10 million tons of waste. Wow, that's a lot of poop. No wonder someone is studying its effects on our environment! Learn more at [waukeshacounty.gov/cleanwater](http://waukeshacounty.gov/cleanwater)

Happy Scooping!